



STATE OF WASHINGTON

## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

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The following are responses from Commerce to questions from Washington electric utility representatives regarding the Clean Energy Funds Smart Grid Grant Program Guideline Final (2.0) Version dated November 18, 2013.

**Question 1:** If a utility submits a project for funding under the grant and a portion of that project was previously planned and budgeted for by the utility, but on a significantly smaller scale, *is* the entire project, as submitted under the grant, eligible for match funding? This would be in accordance with the Certification of Organizational Official: "The project proposed in this application could not go forward at the scale or on the schedule proposed without the requested funding."

**Answer 1:** Yes, if the project meets the threshold criteria of the grant program and was previously planned and budgeted within existing Capital expenditure and resource plans. Development costs incurred after July 1, 2013 for that prior project initiative would now be eligible for match funding for those projects being proposed at the scale and schedule made possible by this Smart Grid Grant Program. The July 1, 2013 cutoff date would also apply to both In-Kind and Cash/Local Match sources of contributions.

**Question 2:** On page 3, paragraph 3, the Application Guidelines state "A single submittal may address one or more of the four categories, but no entity can propose more than one project or program to address each category." Is an entity allowed to propose multiple projects, under one program submittal, that address the same two or three categories?

**Answer 2:** An entity (electric utility) can submit multiple applications. Each application must address at least one of the four categories and may address multiple categories. Each application will be separately scored by the Experts Panel. An application that consists of essentially redundant projects demonstrating the same or similar technologies (address same category or set of categories) may not be awarded the requested level of funding as Commerce may choose to fund only a portion of the listed projects or none at all.

**Question 3:** How are the Budget calculations for contractors or subcontractors under Personnel Services and Contractual Services different?

**Answer 3:** Commerce will be updating the sample budget form on page 20. This update will be posted to the Commerce website by December 4, 2013.

**Question 4:** On page 15 of the Application Guidelines, under the heading Project Budget Instructions the proposal asks for a breakdown of the budget by task. The sample project budget, on page 20 of the Application Guidelines, shows the budget broken down by Source of Funding and Activity. Does the State have a template for budget breakdown by task as well?

**Answer 4:** Commerce will be updating the sample budget form on page 20. This update will be posted to the Commerce website by December 4, 2013.

**Question 5:** Does the panel have any advice on proposal length? In the draft Application Guidelines there was a 10 page limit. This was taken out of the final Application Guidelines.

**Answer 5:** Prior references to limits for proposal length were removed from the draft in response to comments from utilities. Elsewhere in the guideline, emphasis is placed on providing brief and summary responses. The Experts Panel will have a relatively short (2-3 work days) review period prior to scoring the proposals. 10 Mb is the size limit of attachments that Commerce systems can accept. See also Part VII, Item 2 on page 12. Commerce will provide e-mail confirmation to the applicant's designated contact as each application is received and as threshold review is performed accordance with Part IV Eligibility Information.

**Question 6:** Can utilities post confidential supporting documents to a secure SharePoint site? This would allow supporting documents to be submitted without becoming part of the public record. The supporting documents would show advanced work completed to date on engineering and design.

**Answer 6:** Making documents available to the Experts Panel through access of a secure SharePoint is not practical for the process and timeframe allowed. Please provide supporting documents in PDF format that illustrate general concepts, development work, milestones, etc. without including sensitive commercial trade information, intellectual property or proprietary labeling. All submittals to Commerce are subject to public records requests (See pages 9-10 of the application guideline for details on treatment of confidential information submitted to Commerce).

**Question 7:** Can forward maintenance costs be considered as "in-kind" sources of funding?

**Answer 7:** Yes

**Question 8:** Mason PUD 3 has been considering an advanced meter upgrade for its system monitoring and customer meter reading. It appears that a project like this is not covered in the four objectives of the CEF Smart Grid Grant program, however it may give us the opportunity to integrate some of the initiatives in the future. Am I correct in this assessment?

**Answer 8:** A standalone “advanced meter upgrade” would not appear to meet the criteria of the initiative.

**Question 9:** Does the Department of Commerce have grant or assistance programs for installation of advanced meters of retail utilities?

**Answer 9:** Commerce does not have any funds available to electric utilities that are targeted for advanced meter upgrade projects. In general, the state doesn’t provide direct funding to the state’s electric utilities.